In the Claims

1. (Currently amended) An effects application system comprising:

an effects source for applying an effect onto an image and

a translucent masking tool which defines a masked portion that prevents the effect source from applying the effect onto the masked portion of the image, the translucent masking tool dynamically moving within the image in response to user input during the application of the effect.

2. (Original) The effects application system according to Claim 1 wherein the translucent masking tool has a customized shape.

3. (Original) The effects application system according to Claim 1 wherein the translucent masking tool is movable relative to the image.

4. (Original) The effects application system according to Claim 1 wherein the translucent masking tool simulates a fixed edge.

5. (Currently amended) The effects application system according the Claim 1 wherein the masked portion of the image is denoted by cross-hatching while the masked portion of the image is still viewable by ~~a~~ the user.

6. (Currently amended) The effects application system according to Claim 1 wherein the masked portion of the image is denoted by shading while the masked portion of the image is still viewable by ~~a~~ the user.

7. (Currently amended) A method of masking comprising:

positioning a masking tool over a masked portion of an image;

applying an effect onto the image outside the masked portion; and

dynamically ~~moved~~ moving the masking tool within the image while applying the effect in response to user input, wherein the masked portion changes as the masking tool is dynamically moved.

8. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 further comprising customizing a shape of the masking tool.

9. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 wherein the masking tool is translucent.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim 7 wherein the masked portion of the image is viewable to ~~a~~ the user.

11. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 wherein the masked portion of the image is shaded.

12. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 wherein dynamically moving the masking tool and applying the effect occur simultaneously.

13. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 further comprising applying multiple masking tools onto the image.

14. (New) A machine-readable medium having instructions to cause a processor to execute a method comprising:

positioning a masking tool over a masked portion of an image;

applying an effect onto the image outside the masked portion; and

dynamically moving the masking tool within the image while applying the effect in response to user input, wherein the masked portion changes as the masking tool is dynamically moved.

15. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the method further comprises customizing a shape of the masking tool.

16. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the masking tool is translucent.

17. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the masked portion of the image is viewable to the user.

18. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the masked portion of the image is shaded.

19. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein dynamically moving the masking tool and applying the effect occur simultaneously.

20. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 14, wherein the method further comprises applying multiple masking tools onto the image.

21. (New) A computerized system comprising:

a processor coupled to a memory through a bus; and

an effects application process executed from the memory by the processor to cause the processor to position a masking tool over a masked portion of an image, apply an effect onto the image outside the masked portion, and dynamically move the masking tool within the image while applying the effect in response to user input, wherein the masked portion changes as the masking tool is dynamically moved.

22. (New) The computerized system of claim 21, wherein the effects application process further causes the processor to customize a shape of the masking tool.

23. (New) The computerized system of claim 21, wherein the masked portion of the image is viewable to the user.

24. (New) The computerized system of claim 21, wherein the masked portion of the image is shaded.

25. (New) The computerized system of claim 21, wherein dynamically moving the masking tool and applying the effect occur simultaneously.

26. (New) The computerized system of claim 21, wherein the effects application process further causes the processor to apply multiple masking tools onto the image.

27. (New) An apparatus comprising:

means for applying an effect onto an image and

means for defining a masked portion that prevents the means for applying from applying the effect onto the masked portion of the image, wherein the means for defining is configured to dynamically move within the image in response to user input during the application of the effect.